

COMPETE Trip Report

Event/s	1. Fourth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of ACTIF): 1 st August 2012 2. Cotton, Textile & Apparel Stakeholders Forum: 2-3 August 2012
Date [s]	1 st – 3 rd August 2012
Venue	Accra, Ghana (La Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra)
Attended By	B. Fisher, CTA Advisor
Date of Report	6 th August 2012
Report Prepared By	B. Fisher
List of Supporting Reports/Web Links	1. ACTIF AGM Notice and Agenda 2. Program – CTA Stakeholders Forum

Introduction / Purpose of Meeting

1. To attend and participate in ACTIF's fourth Annual General Meeting held in Accra on 1st August 2012
2. To attend and participate in a regional cotton, textile and apparel stakeholder's forum, held in Accra, Ghana on 2nd and 3rd August 2012 (program *attached*). ACTIF (the African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation) held the forum in collaboration with the Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and duly liaised with the West Africa Trade Hub in this regard. The forum is part of UNECA's efforts to promote regional integration and to build linkages and trade opportunities between eastern, western and southern Africa regions across the cotton, textiles and apparel value chain. The forum focused on issues impacting competitiveness, trade policy, the impact of AGOA, value addition and regional cooperation.

COMPETE Contribution

1. B. Fisher participated in the proceedings of the ACTIF AGM, provided input into the development of the "Notice" and agenda, and tabled proposals:
 - a. To widen the membership structure of the Federation, and therefore to amend sub-sections of Article 2;
 - b. To review Article 4.8 as it relates to the appointment of "nominated" Directors and the term thereon; and
 - c. To introduce, as members of the Board, an "ex-officio" non-voting category. This is designed to cater for any donor organizations that required an 'observer' seat on the Board for oversight of the use and application of its funds; and to cater for any particular specialist expertise that would add value to board deliberations.
2. B. Fisher delivered remarks on the role of the ECA Trade Hub, its strategic approach, its focus, successes and program initiatives. Also provided 'discussion input' into the state of trade and other developments in textiles and apparel in East and Central Africa.

Key Results of Meeting

ACTIF AGM

1. Resolution passed to introduce a new category of "Corporate" members, this being individual private companies involved in the cotton, textile or apparel sectors, and having a

bona fide business based in Africa. The Memorandum and Articles of the Federation will be amended accordingly (sub-sections of Article 2). Any eligible company will have the same rights and voting powers as national associations.

2. Resolution passed to align the tenure of “nominated” directors to that of the main Board of Directors, by introducing a biennial rotation basis of retirement. Article 4.8. will be amended accordingly.
3. Resolution passed to introduce, as members of the Board, an “ex-officio” non-voting category. The tenure of any such appointments will be reviewed by the Board annually.
4. Membership fees increased by 83% and 50% for corporate and associate categories respectively

STAKEHOLDERS FORUM

1. The regional cotton, textile and apparel stakeholders’ forum was held in collaboration with the Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), with the participants funded by the ATPC. Forty participants attended the forum from across southern, eastern and west Africa, encompassing:
 - 13 countries
 - 3 regional/Africa associations
 - 17 national associations
 - All 3 Trade Hubs (southern, eastern, and west), covering 48 countries
 - 2 international organizations (UNECA and UNCTAD)
2. The event was seen as the start of a new chapter in regional collaboration, and all countries/associations represented, presented an insight and snapshot of the industries in each country, which included highlighting the opportunities and challenges. ACTIF will extract and analyze these opportunities and challenges, and will present the findings to all stakeholders, to establish common ground, and to inform possible future action or activities. This analysis would also contain a seed cotton pricing comparison to establish the differences between each country, and what the reasons are – the stark difference between Zambia (at 32 US c/kg) and Zimbabwe (at between 77 and 84 US c/kg) was alarming.
3. Another key topic was how to address the “weak link” in the value chain, this being the lack of investment in the textile sector. It was agreed that ACTIF would take the lead, together with input from its members and other stakeholders, to identify what exactly were the barriers to investment. It was recognized that to promote and establish an enabling environment conducive to the growth and support of the textile sector, Governments needed the political will, needed progressive national policies, and needed a specific, deliberate and conscious commitment to this end.
4. On AGOA and the news that the 3rd country fabric extension to 2015 had been passed by both Congress and the Senate, ACTIF were congratulated on its advocacy efforts that no doubt contributed to this success. However, it was recognized that US buyers would not have a long term sourcing strategy for Africa just based on this success. It was agreed that the industry now needed to look beyond 2015, to inject some innovative and smart thinking to consider the structure and form that a “New Look” AGOA should take. To inform the direction to take, this new initiative would include:
 - Wide engagement of the private sector and of businesses trading under AGOA
 - Engagement and dialogue with the full spectrum of stakeholders in the US
 - Targeted engagement of US buyers themselves.

This information would be used to inform national governments, whose AGOA strategies themselves must now be focused beyond 2015.

5. New ACTIF membership:

- Three new corporate members (2 from Mali, and 1 from Cote de Voire)
- One associate member from Nigeria

Key Contacts Made / Bilateral Consultations

1. Consultations held with the West Africa Trade Hub (WATH):
 - Deputy Director of WATH, Sara Engleka, officiated at the opening session of the stakeholders forum sengleka@watradehub.com
 - Long standing COP Vanessa Adams left the Hub on 1st August, to be replaced by Mr. Byron Battle of Carana Corporation, starting 1st September 2012
bbattle@watradehub.com
2. Consultations held with the Southern Africa Trade Hub (SATH), Cosmas Mamhunze the AGOA Trade Specialist cmamhunze@satradehub.org (counterpart to Finn Holm-Olsen). Point to note - the SATH CTA Advisor who resigned from the Hub in May of this year has not yet been replaced, and the replacement Technical Director/Value Chain Specialist Tim Piper, has also just resigned.
3. Alan Kyerematen, Head of the Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Mr Kyerematen is spearheading arrangements for the second Africa Trade Forum (ATF II) to be held from 24-26 September 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the theme "Boosting Intra-African Trade and Establishing the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)". The forum is a joint initiative of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Forum (AfDB). He is a former Minister of Trade in Ghana, and there is talk of aspirations for the Presidency down the line.

Follow Up Actions

Continue engagement with ACTIF to provide technical assistance and guidance on institutional matters arising out of the AGM, and on initiatives coming out of the stakeholders' forum

Additional Information/Observations
